The purpose of the system is to support the process of submission, evaluation and selection of papers for a conference.

1 Actors

The following actors participate in this system:

1. PC Chair – is responsible for creating the conference, determining the conference topics (or tracks) and subjects, establishing the Program Committee, and, advised by the PC Members, defining the final list of accepted and rejected papers. The conference is supposed to have a set of tracks (or topics), and optionally a set of subjects. The PC Chair also defines the conference deadlines: submission, review, and notification.

2. PC Member – is responsible for evaluating a set of papers assigned to him. A PC Member may indicate another person as a reviewer of a paper. The PC Members are responsible for advising the PC Chair in determining the final list of accepted and rejected papers.

3. Reviewer – is responsible for reviewing a paper

4. Author – is responsible for submitting a paper for acceptance at the conference. Since PC Members and Reviewers may also be Authors, they must have different IDs for each role.

With the exception of the PC Chair, all other actors must register in the system in order to participate in all processes.

PC Members are pre-registered by the PC Chair, but must confirm their registration personally, including changing their password and entering affiliation and contact information. PC Members may also indicate their preferences for conference topics and subjects, when defined.

Reviewers may be pre-registered by the PC Chair or by any other PC Member, but must also confirm their registration, in the same way as PC Members. Reviewers may not indicate any preferences regarding topics or subjects.

Authors must register before submitting any papers. An author may pre-register a co-author, in which case the co-author must register himself as well, in order to have access to the system.

2 Functions

The following functions (processes) must be supported by the system.

2.1 Paper Submission

Any registered author may submit a paper. To do this, the author must inform the paper authors (all of whom must be registered), the title, the abstract, the conference track, and a set of subjects chosen from a list previously determined by the PC Chair, if there is one. The system, after checking the authors’ registrations, assigns a paper ID to the new paper, and allows the user to submit it by uploading a file.
At any moment, an author is allowed to check the data about his submitted papers. Until the submission deadline, the author is also allowed to substitute the uploaded file by a new one, or to change any of the informed data about the paper.

2.2 Assignment of Papers to PC Members

Once a submission has been made, the PC Chair may browse the list of papers, and indicate potential conflicts of interest between PC Members and submitted papers. In particular, any paper authored by a PC Member automatically constitutes conflict of interest.

Once the submission deadline has been reached, the PC Chair opens the list of submitted papers for perusal by the PC Members, who may indicate their interest (an integer in the range \([0,1,2]\), where 0 indicates no interest, 1 indicates moderate interest and 2 indicates strong interest), and also conflicts of interest with some papers. Once a conflict of interest has been established between a PC Member and a paper, the PC Member will not see any information whatsoever about the paper, until the final decision about acceptance and rejection of papers.

The PC Chair, looking at the list of preferred papers of the PC Members, as well as their indicated preferred topics and subjects, assigns papers to PC Members for reviewing. Once this assignment has been made, each PC Member receives an email message with the list of papers, and a URL to a page where he can access these papers.

Typically the PC Chair will assign the same paper for review by three or more reviewers.

The PC Chair may also change the track/topic furnished by an author for a given paper.

2.3 Assignment of Papers to Reviewers

A PC Member may re-assigning a paper to a Reviewer. In this case, the reviewer will be responsible for entering the paper evaluation, but the PC Member is the final responsible for the paper evaluation during the selection process. Each time a reviewer enters a review, the associated PC Member is notified of this event by the system.

2.4 Entering a Review

A PC Member, or a Reviewer, may enter a review for a paper assigned to him. Each paper review is made up of a set of evaluation items, each of which may be graded in the range \([1-5]\). One of these items is a final recommendation, also in the range 1-5, where 1 means Strong Reject; 2 means Reject; 3 means Indifference; 4 means Accept; and 5 means Strong Accept. There are also two text fields, the first one “Confidential Comments to the PC”, and the second one “Comments for the Authors”.

The review is entered by accessing a form containing all the evaluation items. In addition to these items, the PC Member/Reviewer may indicate if the review is final or not. If the review is not final, he may change any part of the review up until the review deadline defined by the PC Chair.

A PC Member may see other reviews (entered by others) for any of the papers he is reviewing, but only after he has entered his own review. Even if he has not entered his review, however, he may know how many reviews have already been entered for any paper he has the right to access, and their status (final or not).

The PC Chair has full access to all papers and all reviews.

2.5 Choosing Accepted and Rejected Papers.

Once the review deadline has been reached, the review process is closed. All PC Members are allowed to see all the papers and their respective reviews. The system is able to show the
list of papers ranked by a number of relevant criteria, such ordered by any of the evaluation items (including final recommendation), author, title, affiliation, subject, etc...

After deliberation, the PC Chair, taking into account the recommendations of the PC Members and reviewers, chooses the papers that will be accepted and rejected, marking them appropriately through an interface furnished by the system. During this selection process, the PC Chair and PC Members may visualize the status of the process at any stage, by looking at the list of papers already marked for acceptance, for rejection, and still undecided. Several statistics are also shown, such a totals for each category, acceptance rates, number of papers per track per status, etc...

Once the process is marked as finalized by the PC Chair, the system issues a notification message to paper authors, which includes the appropriate parts of the reviews submitted by the PC Members and reviewers. It is also possible to visualise the list of accepted and rejected papers.